WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY—Founded December 19, 1857 APRIL 1975

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The mood of the weather this winter has been "trying" to say the least, and I wish to contemplate this situation with you for a moment, if I may. Surely there has to be some reason that has kept snow on the ground well into the month of April. My daffodils are up three inches--at least they were before they were buried beneath several inches of snow. Many of the birds have returned, but if they could talk "people-talk" I suspect their remarks would be unprintable. And then there is my very confused neighbor--he has had to unhitch his recently hitched boat and re-attach his ski-rack. I guess my frustration stems from a guilt feeling-- is it possible that I, as president of the WCHS, forgot to assign the '74-'75 winter weather to C. Howard Ross? If so, I deeply apologize for I know that we would be having a beautiful spring by now if only Dr. Ross had been in charge.

But cheer up, warm weather will come, along with the plethora of "happenings" we love best--our June Historical Tour (It is going to be extra special this year.); the ice cream social at the Bethel Church; a picnic with the Dexter Historical Society; Manchester chicken-broil; the Ypsilanti Parade and Heritage Festival; Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, etc.--and in the middle of it all will be Wystan Stevens with his camera.

I guess we can all agree, winter in Washtenaw County just makes Spring, Summer, and Fall especially sweet.

Hazel Proctor, President

FOURSOME TO DISCUSS FINDING, RESTORING OF CLARK–CHAPIN PIANO AT SUNDAY MEETING

Four persons most responsible for finding and restoring the Clark-Chapin piano will tell how it was done at the April meeting of the Washtenaw County Historical Society.

The meeting will be at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at the Frederick Stearns Bldg. on North Campus, which houses the Stearns Collection of musical instruments. Dr. Robert A. Warner, curater of the collection, will speak briefly about it. (He is not to be confused with Dr. Robert M. Warner, director of the Michigan Historical Collections at Bentley Library.)

Speakers about the piano will include Lela Duff, Herbert Bartlett, Leigh Anderson and Prof. Kurt Pickut.

The brown brick building is at the corner of Broadway and Baits Dr., one block east of Cedar Bend Dr. Free parking is available on the north side of Broadway. Some metered parking is available behind the building off Gilbert Ct. The meters operate 24 hours a day including Sunday. Parking on Baits and Gilbert Ct. is not permitted.

WCHS LOSES ONE OF IT'S MOST FAITHFUL MEMBERS WITH RECENT PASSING OF KATHERINE STEEB GROOMES

The Washtenaw County Historical Society lost one of its most faithful members with the passing of Katherine Steeb Groomes on Tuesday, March 18, at 88 years of age.

Mrs. Groomes was a past-president of WCHS and she served as secretary-treasurer for 21 years. A life member, she hadn't missed a meeting as long as anyone could remember.

As a child she grew up on Washington St. in downtown Ann Arbor across from what is now Bimbo's. She was employed as a teacher and bookkeeper in earlier years, in the latter position for $12 a week.

She married I. William Groomes on Oct. 1, 1915. They lived in Ann Arbor and operated a bathing beach at Whitmore Lake for many years. He died in 1960.

Gifts to the society from Mrs. Groomes through her daughter, Marguerite Berg of Ithaca, N.Y., include a melodeon the Groomes received as a wedding present and a framed seed wreath.

DATING PRE–1900 PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE TOPIC

How can you tell if that old photograph in the attic was really Great Aunt Samantha as a girl?

While Dr. Arnold Pilling of Wayne State University doesn't know the specifics of your family tree he does know a lot about how to date pictures from 1850-1900 by their style and details.

He will share this information at a meeting of the Genealogy Section of WCHS at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, May 18, in Rooms C-222–224 at Pioneer High School. It is open to the public.

Ralph Muncy, chairman, says that sometimes a 10-year span is as close as Dr. Pilling can come, but in other cases he can narrow it as close as a two-year period. For example, during a two year period in the Civil War, revenue stamps had to be affixed. So a picture with those stamps was made during that period.

ANN ARBOR POLITICS, 1901-03

RAILROAD VIADUCTS MEMORIAL TO MAYOR COPELAND

At the turn of the century, Ann Arbor election campaigns were shorter than now but there was no lack of politics.

After a nine-day campaign characterized as the "warmest in history--but with no resort to personalities," Dr. Royal S. Copeland was elected Mayor of Ann Arbor in 1901.

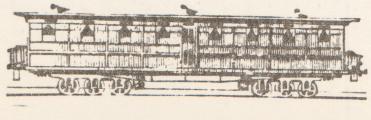
Frank Wilhelme, director of the Historical Society of Michigan, spoke on Dr. Copeland's two-year Ann Arbor mayoral career at the March meeting of WCHS.

Later Dr. Copeland was a United States Senator from New York state and a household word to many who heard his advice on health matters on radio or read it in his newspaper column. But he began his political career in Ann Arbor.

During his term of office with two competing interurbans laying track into town, he thought it was urgent to raise the Ann Arbor Railroad tracks to prevent danger and delays that would occur if all their traffic was at street level. He also thought the private water company charged the city too much rent on fire hydrants and feared the city would soon be bankrupt if immediate economy measures were not taken.

At the time of his nomination, the local Republican party was split between supporters of A.J. Sawyer, an attorney and state legislator from Ann Arbor, and his arch-enemy, William Judson, sheriff. Since Dr. Copeland had supported both it was thought he could draw the opposing forces together, Wilhelme said.

The local Democratic paper, the "Ann Arbor Daily Argus," observed that "politics make strange bedfellows, and it is really a side-show drawing card to see Billy Judson and A. J. Sawyer out hustling for the nomination of Dr. Copeland for mayor."



His Democratic opponent was the incumbent, Gottlob Luick, seeking his second term. (The wife of Mayor James E. Stephenson is a grandniece of Luick, Wilhelme noted.)

Following Copeland's nomination, even the Argus had a good word for him. In a bi-partisan editorial it called him "an able and popular man... The city is assured a good administration whichever is elected." However, the Argus became markedly more partisan as the campaign intensified, Wilhelme said.

While the Argus characterized both candidates as being of "unimpeachable character" Mayor Luick merited such phrases as "practical businessman...in close touch with laboring man..German-American... experienced."

Copeland, on the other hand, was called a "theoretical businessman...not in touch with laborers.. Judsonite...inexperienced."

On the other hand, the Republican "Courier-Register" endorsed Dr. Copeland and emphasized his efforts in behalf of the University, especially his role in keeping the homeopathic college from being moved to Detroit. It stressed that keeping the college in Ann Arbor would mean one-hundred thousand dollars of employment for the labor force of the city.

Dr. Copeland polled 1,435 votes, 242 more than Luick. The Prohibition and Socialist party candidates trailed far behind with 28 and 24 votes, respectively.

Nine Republican aldermen and six Democrats were elected to City Council at the same time. There was only one alleged irregularity in the election, namely that a Republican poll-watcher had gone into the voting booth and helped voters select their candidates, but no charges were pressed.

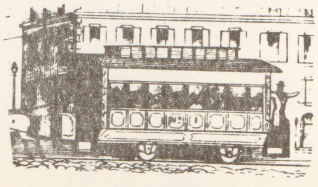
Dr. Copeland apparently tried to appease most interest groups including Democrats when he made his appointments. He appointed several Judsonite Republicans, several Democrats, one un-aligned doctor, and most controversially, A.J. Sawyer, a Republican anti-Judsonite as city attorney.

Dr. Copeland did not appoint a Negro to the police force despite petitions to do so on behalf of two candidates. One candidate, Samuel W. Wilson, was supported by 37 Negro voters including the pastors of the Bethel A.M.E. and Second Baptist Churches, plus a number of Ann Arbor's most prominent citizens, many of them Republicans.

Not anticipating trouble on his appointments, Dr. Copeland was in Washington D.C. when Council considered them. They approved all but Sawyer as city attorney. He was defeated 7-6 by five Democrats and two Republicans.

Acting Mayor John Haarer appointed Frank Stiver to the post and he was unanimously approved. When Dr. Copeland got word of this he took the first train back to Ann Arbor and blasted Haarer for "Tammany tactics". Dr. Copeland vetoed Stiver's appointment.

The "Ann Arbor Argus-Democrat", a weekly reprint of important "Daily Argus" articles claimed the veto was illegal. For several months there was a question of who was city attorney. Dr. Copeland claimed E. B. Norris of



the previous administration was still city attorney and Copeland sued the city for back wages for Norris and won. Stiver resigned. Sawyer was reappointed. Again it didn't pass the council but it was finally approved on a third try.

Part of the opposition to Sawyer no doubt arose from the fact that Sawyer had for years represented the private Ann Arbor Water Co. with whom the city had had an ongoing struggle over water pressure, quality and rates. But it was clear that the city needed an attorney to handle interurban problems so approval was finally given.

Of most immediate concern to the new mayor were the city's finances. He said the city was bankrupt and estimated it would be $35,000 in debt by August 1, if something weren't done.

He wanted to change the charter to be able to issue bonds without legislative approval but failed to get the necessary state legislation. Failing in that, he succeeded in reducing the debt to $13,000 at the end of his two year term, in spite of a disastrous flood in 1902.

Concerning water problems, Council considered city control of the water company, building a separate system and legislation to force down the rates. The city offered to buy the water company for $200,000 but the company wanted $450,000. State legislation would have been needed to build a separate city system.

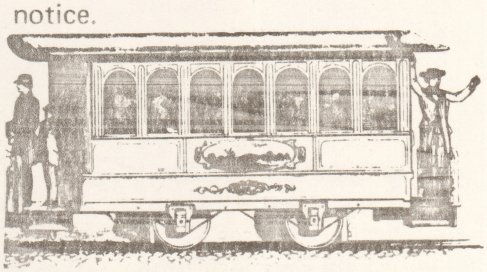
The city thought $8,000 a year rent for fire hydrants was excessive and passed an ordinance forcing down the rates. The water company challenged it but then voluntarily submitted to a $4,400 annual payment. That established the principle that the city determined the rates. (In 1913 the city bought the water company for the original asking price of $450,000.)

To Dr. Copeland the coming of the interurbans made urgent the grade separation or raising of the Ann Arbor Railroad above the streets to avoid expected traffic problems.

Streetcars had been talked of since the Civil War but construction didn't begin until 1888. On Sept. 29, 1890, service began between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti allowing ready transportation between campuses for U-M men and Ypsilanti Normal College coeds.

By 1896 service was available from Ann Arbor to Detroit. During the period from 1898 to 1902 two lines were vying for the best right of way out of Ann Arbor to Jackson and eventually Chicago. They were the Jackson Traction Co. or Boland line and the Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor and Jackson Railroad or Hawks-Angus line. Of course the best route was Huron St.

Before Dr. Copeland's term, the issue of which line should get the Huron St. route had divided Council and town and the decision had been delayed. Then in December 1900 Mayor Luick called a surprise meeting on only two hours notice.



The 12 aldermen attending awarded the Huron St. franchise to the Hawks-Angus line 9-3 and the Boland line, Miller Ave., 10-2.

While the Courier-Register had no misgivings about the action and thought Hawks-Angus "more earnest", the Argus-Democrat was very critical of the hastily called meeting.

Laying of the tracks from Jackson to Ann Arbor was like a horserace with weekly reports in the papers, Wilhelme said.

A year later, the Boland line, which was losing the race sued the Hawks-Angus line for laying tracks on Huron St., claiming they never received a legal franchise because of the hastily called meeting. Judge (Edward D.) Kinne ruled in Boland's favor and Acting Mayor Haarer asked for an injunction against Hawks-Angus stopping any further tearing up of Huron St. (Mayor Copeland was in Europe at this time.)

Meanwhile, the Ann Arbor Railroad, fearing that Hawks-Angus would tear up its tracks, placed its big No. 7 engine in the middle of Huron St. Hundreds of Ann Arborites gathered anticipating a battle between the work crews but Judge Kinne issued a temporary injunction restraining Hawks-Angus from crossing at grade.

A week later, Judge Kinne reversed his decision on the Boland suit, saying it was too late to question the validity of the Hawks-Angus franchise because Council had voted two thirds in favor on matters relating to the franchise since that time.

Council had approved a revised franchise ordinance under Mayor Copeland, requiring white headlights, hourly runs from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., stopping 30 feet from railroad crossings and speed limits of 12 miles per hour downtown and 20 miles per hour on the outskirts.

Some business men were anxious to get street railway service open to Jackson. They felt they had lost business to Detroit after interurban service began and they hoped to expand their business to the west.

A complex, yearlong debate was waged during which a mayor's committee and a citizen's committee negotiated with the three railroads. A grade separation ordinance was introduced to the Council on March 3, 1902. However, after H.W. Ashley, general manager of the Ann Arbor Railroad, voiced objections it was sent back to the mayor's committee.

Ashley objected to building a bridge over First St. He would pay for a bridge over Ann or Felch Sts. but not both.

The ordinance was resubmitted at a special meeting on March 31 during which Dr. Copeland carefully reviewed arguments for and against the proposal.

Answering those who thought the elevation of the Ann Arbor railroad would result in a "Chinese wall" across the city, he emphasized that masonry abutments would be at the inner sidewalk line and the steel viaduct would be approximately 15 feet above the streets to minimize visual obstruction.

Some property owners thought their businesses would be inaccessable. The mayor agreed that some accusations were valid, especially for the vinegar factory, but spoke of possible special legislation to buy sufficient land to allow suitable access to the factory and said all other businesses would be provided with adequate side tracks.

He conceded that the project would impose some expense on the city but not exesssive, in his view. He stated that "in the history of civilization, there has not been an improvement in appearance, comfort, health, or protection of any individual or community without the expenditure of money or its equivalent."

Turning to arguments in favor, he thought the existing situation would result in intolerable delays when all three railroads were operating and he considered the threat to human life completely unacceptable.

He estimated the cost to the city at about $10,000 but said he was willing to appropriate $25,000 if the success of the grade separation required it. In closing, he stressed that "if we can do but one thing, let us take care of the grades first."

Council approved the ordinance 9-5 but there were still some questions and a disastrous flood in the summer of 1902 diverted attention from the controversy until fall.

In October the ordinance was resubmitted and the completion date was set for Oct. 1, 1904. Because of further delays by the railroads construction did not begin until the spring of 1903,, when Dr. Copeland completed his two-year term as mayor.

The work completed by the 1904 deadline cost about $90,000. The city paid $10,000; Hawks-Angus, $30,000; Boland, $10,000; and the Ann Arbor Railroad, $40,000. As can be seen today, only Washington, Huron, Miller and Felch Streets viaducts were ever completed, though the ordinance called for separation also of Liberty and Ann.

In his closing message to Council, Copeland said, "to my mind the greatest achievement of your honorable body is the consummation of the grade separation project...Everything sinks into insignificance when human life can be saved..."

While the issues that he faced were not original with him, and many were not finally solved during his term, "his role in accomplishing water rate reduction and the commencing of grade separation was considerable," Wilhelme concluded.

***

Editor's Note: Wilhelme's talk was based on his master's thesis in history which he earned at Eastern Michigan University. He was formerly a teacher in Dexter where he helped organize the Dexter Historical Society.

LOCAL COLUMNIST IN 'MICHIGAN FARMER' ADVISED 1840'S GARDENERS ON PLANTING, COPING WITH BUGS

By Nan Hodges

As a bright April sun melts the remains of our last blizzard, we itch to start planting our vegetable garden. But wait! Should we take a chance on sowing everything on the first warm day in April only to have a late frost in May nip our hopes for the earliest lettuce on the block? We consult gardening books, local newspapers, ask our more experienced gardening friends for dates of first plantings and soil preparation.

But how did people in Washtenaw County know when to plant their kitchen gardens back in the "good ole days," back in 1845?

They read the "Michigan Farmer and Western Agriculturalist," a monthly agricultural journal which was first published in Jackson in 1843. This journal whose purpose was "to introduce useful improvements in the Practice and Science of Agriculture in all its various departments--to improve the cultivation of the rich and fertile soil of the West--and to elevate the standing and ennoble the character of Western Agriculturists" was overflowing with information on everything from soil chemistry to pickling red cabbage to the moral attitudes of the farmer's daughter.

In April, 1844, an article on the vegetable garden warned farmers to be cautious and to prepare the soil for only one half of the garden and plant it during the "last half of April, or, when the ground has become dry enough to work freely..."

Early peas should go in first, as soon as the snow was off the ground. In a sunny border lettuce and spinach could be planted, followed by parsnips, carrots, salsify, onions, and early beets. By the first of May a few hills of early potatoes, early corn, and some "China or six-week beans" could be planted. Farmers were warned that if the weather were wet and cold in May, the latter two would fail, but it was worth taking a chance. If the farmer didn't have a "hotbed," he might risk the seeds of cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, and celery in a warm, sunny border.

Early in May, or when the soil began to get warm, the other half of the garden could be plowed and sweet corn, pole beans, marrowfat peas, and early cucumbers and squashes could be planted. Radish could be planted between the cucumbers and by the middle of May herbs and other "small seeds" could be safely planted. Succession plantings of lettuce and radishes were urged as well as the main crop of melons, winter squashes, and Lima beans.

By the first of June more swee corn, winter beets, and cucumbers for pickling could be added and all vacant ground could be filled up with tomatoes and cabbages. (Michigan Farmer, Vol. II, No. 5 (1844), p. 37)

In 1845, the Michigan Farmer engaged an Ann Arbor corresponder S. B. Noble, to give a more detailed guide to the cultivation of a kitchen garden. Beginning in April and continuing in a monthly calendar throug October, Mr. Noble outlined in detail exactly what one had to do to make a success of the "Kitchen Garden, Perennial Flowering Plants, Ornamental Shrubbery, the Fruit

Yard [orchard], and Green House Plants."

Very little is known about S. B. Noble except that he was a commercial gardener who specialized in the raising of dahlias. He told not only what to plant and when, but how to plant the seed. He urged that the soil be made fertile by the addition of "marsh muck" and well-rotted manure combined with deep plowing.

His advice on how to cope with insects in the May, 1845, issue is interesting. In the kitchen garden he recommended: "Keep a good lookout for bugs and worms. The most effectual way to destroy the former is to keep a hen with chickens in "the garden: confine the hen, the chickens will pick the bugs. To destroy the worms take a candle in the evening and examine your vines; you will find them engaged in their work of destruction, and you may destroy them easily.--Make a ring around the hills with dry unleached ashes, an inch thick and two wide. The worms will not be inclined to crawl over the ashes." (Michigan Farmer, Vol. III, No. 3 (1845), p. 33)

In May, 1846, he offered another piece of advice which organic gardeners today will recognize.

"...after all the various plans that are invented [to prevent bugs], the most effectual, and in the end the cheapest way, is, to plant four or five times the seed you need to make the necessary number of plants you want in the hills.--The bugs and worms seldom take all. The price of the seed bears no comparison to the risk of failure of the entire crop." (Michigan Farmer, Vol. IV, No. 2 (1846), p. 31)

With a list of typical vegetables, herbs, and flowers and information on their cultivation from S. B. Nobles's columns in the 1845 Michigan Farmer, the Cobblestone Farm Association in cooperation with Project Grow will begin a kitchen garden on the west lawn of the Ticknor-Campbell House on Packard Rd. with a plowing demonstration with horses planned May 10. Don't be surprised if you see a flickering candle among the cucumber vines on some warm June evening.

ENCLOSED IS A CONTRIBUTION FOR $_____
TO THE WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM BUILDING FUND IN THE MEMORY OF

Send acknowledging card in the name(s) of:

_____

_____

_____

Mail check to: Mr. Ray Spokes, Treasurer
1011 Spruce St., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

MUSEUM FUND GROWING, WELCOMES MEMORIAL GIFTS

The Museum Building Fund has received a number of donations in the memory of Katherine Groomes. Since this account was established in October, 1973, it has received twenty-two donations--nine in lieu of flowers for WCHS members--and now has a balance of over $650.

The funds from this account will be used only for expenses pertaining directly to our Museum. We will shortly begin the sorting, cleaning, repairing and restoration of our many artifacts and the expenses for this activity will be paid from this account.

Anyone wishing to donate to the fund may send a check to Ray Spokes. If you wish to make a contribution in the memory of someone, use the form above or let Ray Spokes or Hazel Proctor know in whose memory you are donating. A card is then sent to the family in your name. All contributions are tax deductible.

ANNUAL REGIONAL CONFERENCE MAY 3 IN OKEMOS

The second annual Southeast Region Historical Conference will meet Saturday, May 3, at the Meridian Charter Township Hall in Okemos.

WCHS hopes to have a good representation there. The advance registration deadline is Friday, April 25. If interested call Hazel Proctor at Ann Arbor Federal Savings. Individual registration is $2.50 plus $3 for luncheon.

Theme of the morning session will be researching your community's history. In the afternoon there will be a tour of the Log Cabin Living Program operated by the Haslett Middle School and short reports by a representative of each local society attending. The emphasis this year has been on Bicentennial preparations.

Morning speakers are Dick Hathaway of the Michigan History Division of the Department of State, "Local Research: Using Printed Sources", and Nan Hodges, "Unraveling the History of the Cobblestone Farm of Ann Arbor." A speaker will informally discuss the Log Cabin living program at lunch in preparation for the tour which will be guided by participating students.

CALENDAR OF LOCAL EVENTS

Chelsea Area Historical Society--Dr. C. Howard Ross of Ann Arbor will talk about "Granny's Herbs and Spices" at 8 p.m. May 12, at the First Congregational Church, 125 E. Middle St. Future meetings are planned at the church, because the new Chelsea group which now has 94 members has outgrown its previous meeting room. A constitution was ratified at the March meeting.

***

Milan Historical Society--Meets 7:30 p.m. third Wednesday of Month (May 21) at Milan Community House.

***

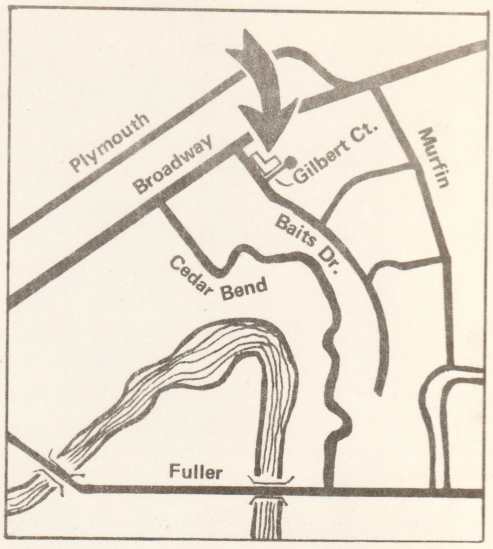
Saline Area Historical Society--8 p.m. May 20, Saline High School Cafeteria. Philip Bondie of Saline will talk on "Bottle Collecting."

The Saline Society is trying to locate as many old pictures of Saline as possible by May 2 to borrow for copying. They will be copied by Dan Lirones, a local photographer and president of the Saline Society. Ann Arbor Federal Savings and Loan will publish a book of historic Saline pictures and the copies of the photos will be given to the SAHS. Hazel Proctor of Ann Arbor Federal Savings and Loan and president of WCHS spoke at the April 15 meeting about collecting old pictures. Pictures may be taken to Lirones' Film Central office at 213 Clark St.

***

Ypsilanti Historical Society--3-5 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the museum, 220 N. Huron St., program, "Show and Tell". Members are invited to bring small antiques and unusual documents and talk about them. Several persons have offered exhibits for the meeting.

APRIL MEETING LOCATION



JUDGE WILL SPEAK IN MAY

Washtenaw County Circuit Judge Ross W. Campbell will give a slide talk on "Early Washtenaw County" at the WCHS meeting at 8 p.m. Thursday, May 22, in Liberty Hall at Ann Arbor Federal Savings, Liberty at Division Sts.

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 96
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Washtenaw Historical Society Meeting
APRIL 27, 1975
Sun. 4:00 P.M.
Stearns Bldg.
North Campus

Miss Eileen Harrison
322 E. Cross St.
Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197